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spectable strangers, the chief place of resort and the loftiest edifice of that kind in the city, containing more than one hundred large and small parlors and lodging rooms, besides the City Assembly Room, chiefly used for concerts and balls."¹

This hotel was erected in 1792 on the site of a famous early hostelry which, we are told by Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, was originally the old Lieutenant - Governor de Lancey homestead, just north of Trinity Church, on the corner of Broadway and Stone Street, known successively as the Province Arms, York Arms, and City Arms, and often called by the name of the proprietor Burns's Tavern or Burns's Coffee House. This was a favorite resort during the Revolution, and here in a large ballroom were given concerts and dancing assemblies. A magnificent banquet was here tendered to Hull, Decatur, and Jones, and here, also, Lafayette was entertained. Later this was

"the chosen place for the Graces," to use the elegant language of Dr. Francis (Old New York, 1865); "here Terpsichore presided with her smiling countenance, and Euterpe first patronized Italian music in this country, under the accomplished discipline of Trazzata." And he adds, coming down to the matter-of-fact, "This long-known and ample hall is not to be forgotten as the first building in this city, if not in the country, in which slate was used as a roof covering, about the year 1800, thus supplanting the old Dutch tile of the Hollanders, in use from the beginning of their dynasty among us."

¹ The picture of New York. D. T. Goodrich. (c. 1828.)

HISTORIC NOTE ON THE LUDLOW COSTUMES

IN the interesting and valuable collection of costumes recently bequeathed to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, by Mrs. James several epochs of American history are represented.

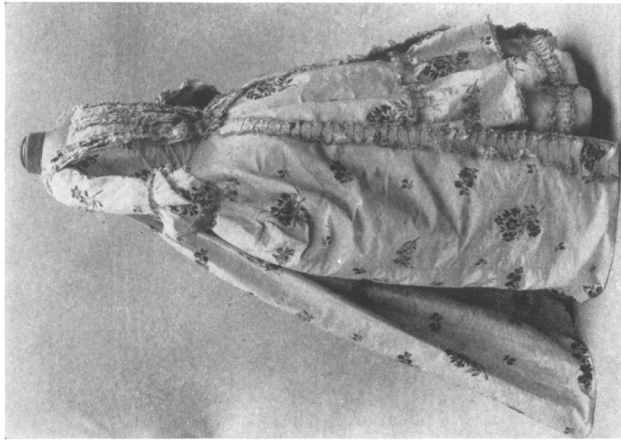
The earliest gown tells of that prosperous time in the Colonial Era when George I was king, fully fifty years before English oppression forced the Colonists to open revolt against the Crown. Then merchant ships from many countries coming and going regularly to and from the port of New York brought the famous fashion dolls from France and the rich Kincob brocades from China out of which the miniature garments of the dolls were copied by the colonial mantuamakers for their fashionable patrons. This particular gown demonstrates



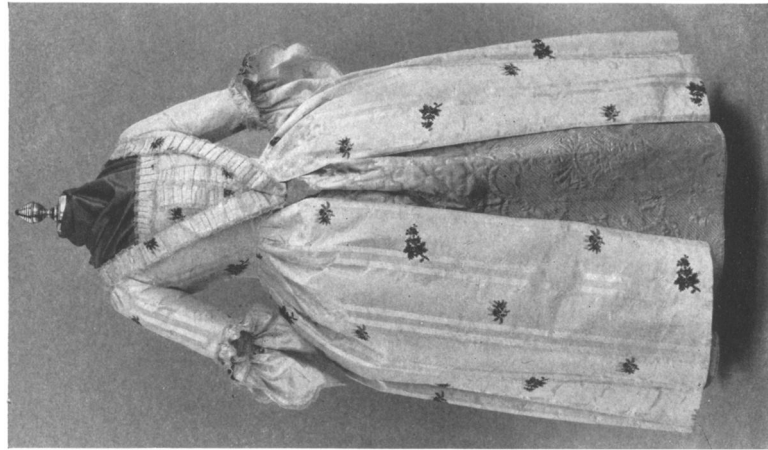
THE CITY HOTEL

FROM AN UNPUBLISHED WATER-COLOR SKETCH, REPRODUCED BY COURTESY OF WILLIAM LORING ANDREWS

the prevailing mode in 1720 when the skirts cleared the ground without a train and were held out by immense hoops, flat at the front and back but extending far out at the sides. We read that ladies of fashion of that time were often obliged to enter a room sidewise, as the hoops were wider than the door frames. The cobweb laces which undoubtedly finished this beautiful dress have probably served to adorn many a pretty costume after this one was laid aside. The fabric is soft silk instead of Kincob, but it is brocaded with small bunches of bright flowers. The quilted petticoat, over which it is worn—a style in vogue then and for many years afterwards—betrays the skill of some long-forgotten needlewoman, but the design is worthy of imitation in these modern days.

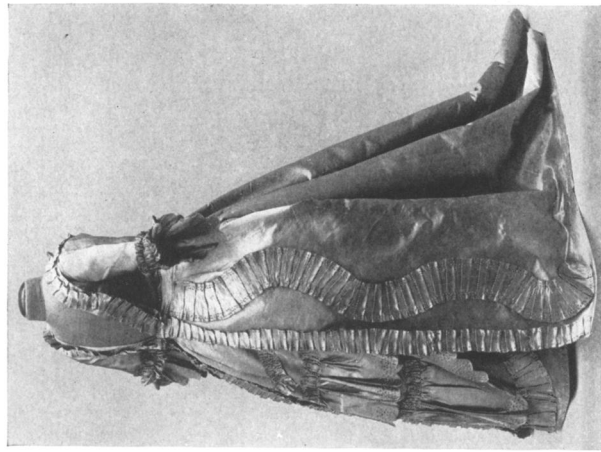


ABOUT 1760



1720-1730

COSTUMES. BEQUEST OF MRS. MARIA P. JAMES



ABOUT 1760

In the colonial dress of soft satin trimmed with flat plaitings of the same material, we discern the new mode of George II's reign when there was a marked improvement in the hoop skirt which, according to the latest edict of Fashion, became more moderate in dimension and of a graceful bell shape.

A third colonial gown of great charm and

beauty shows the picturesque Watteau plaits at the back ending in a sweeping train, such as Madame Pompadour delighted to display at the Court of France. These gowns are wonderfully well preserved and an air of

luxury and pleasant living seems to emanate from their venerable folds, whispering of peaceful days in the thriving colonies, no longer thrilled by Indian outbreaks nor as yet incited to honest indignation by unjust taxation.

The next epoch of American history depicted in the beautiful garments of this collection is that of the early Republic. The first dress of the series was probably worn about 1800 when muslins and gauzes from India were more fashionable than silks and satins. We know that this little gown was worn very early in the new century, or possibly in the last years of the preceding century, from the simple cut of the very short bodice and the sleeves which are drawn up by a narrow cord with a minute hem. Portraits of the day show that many of these simple frocks were worn without trimmings of lace, but about 1810 everything was trimmed with lace.

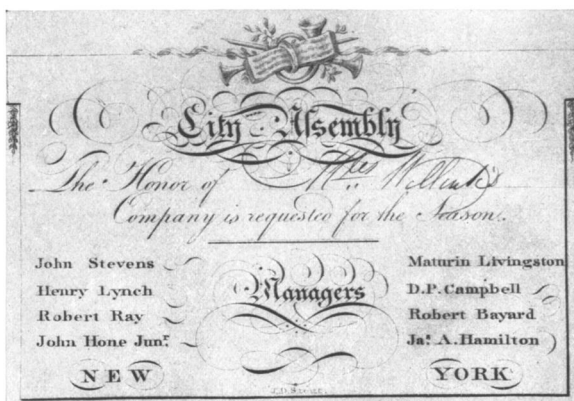
The next gown shows an all-over embroidery in a design of pine trees, evidently popular in 1808, for we have noticed it in other garments of that date.

Three other dresses more elaborately trimmed range in date from 1812 to 1825,

each a beautiful specimen of the prevailing fashion of its day.

During the first ten years of the nineteenth century caps were worn on all occasions and in an endless variety of designs. Close bonnets, called capotes, projecting over the face, small hats, and dressy turbans often decorated with long

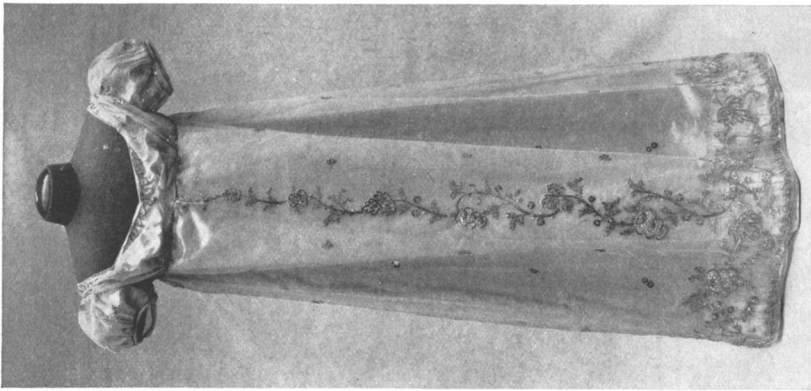
plumes, were very fashionable. After 1810 hats with high crowns and wider brims came into vogue. Choice and dainty specimens of all these articles of apparel are included in this collection; even the queer turbans



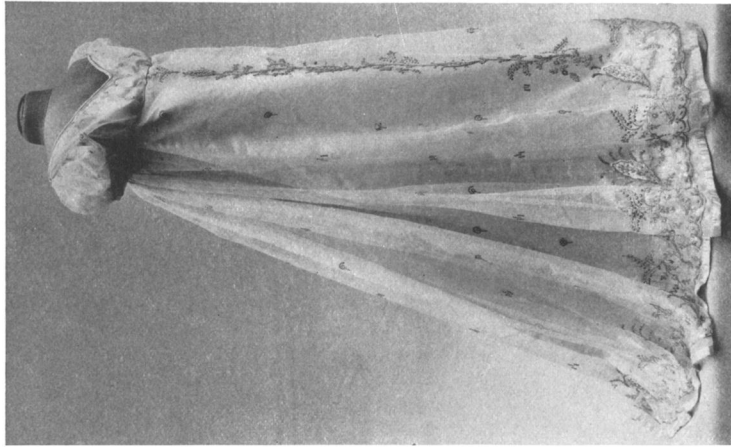
popular in the thirties will be seen, as well as Cabriolet bonnets with flaring brims and high crown, followed in the forties by a revival of the close-fitting bonnets worn at the beginning of the century. Prototypes of the quaint old bonnets of the fifties, familiar to us all in cherished family daguerreotypes, with the wide brims filled in with ruchings of tulle and flowers, carry the history of costume in America down to the less romantic but important epoch of our national life, popularly known as the sixties. What a strange fancy in bonnets we notice in this period; very shallow crowns and scooplike brims were worn far back on the head which they neither protected nor adorned.

The great value of the study of costumes can hardly be overestimated by the student of history. Many a side light is thrown on the character of a people by a discriminating investigation of their apparel; and, as has been aptly said by Mr. Calthorp, in his History of English Dress, "A knowledge of history is never perfect without a knowledge of the clothes with which to dress it."

ELIZABETH McCLELLAN.

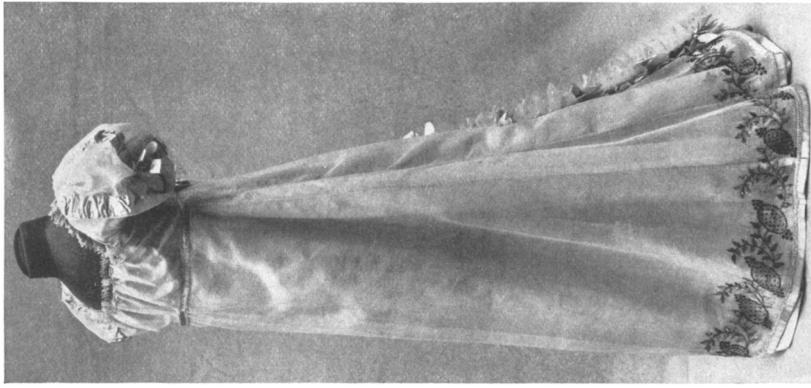


ABOUT 1810



ABOUT 1810

COSTUMES. BEQUEST OF MRS. MARIA P. JAMES



ABOUT 1815